from eldest to youngest, like the little ones round M. de Pourceaugnac: "Papa! Papa!"

And Mr. Ponderbury, surrounded by little girls, stooped down, doubling his little bowed back in half to kiss them, quite lost among the little rogues who clung to him, tugging his shabby overcoat, while here and there, bobbing his sandy head, his thin lips kissed the rosy cheeks, the fresh cheeks of children, bringing joy and a flash of happiness to his fevered eyes.

The huge fishwoman looked on at this scene, smiling at Mr. Ponderbury, while by this time the children's little hands were eagerly fingering the parcel wrapped in black serge that their father gave over to their quick little hands. They were all pushing each other with excitement. It really might have been a pack of hounds at the kill. The children had rushed at whatever it was that the poor man had been carrying, had undone the parcel and were already seizing from the handkerchief they had opened the trimmings of cutlets and fragments of pie with bits of cheese, and the loot of a dinner, when, in the doorway, there now appeared a long, pale, lean, melancholy, bony, fierce face—that of a woman of doubtful age but still young, a woman with emaciated features. At first it seemed to me that I saw nothing but a nose, a long nose, a sharply pointed nose, at once inquisitive and threatening—the nose of a woman dressed in a shoddy gown that clung to her figure like some flimsy stuff flung over a skeleton, while a piercing voice, like the whistle of a locomotive, yelled at the terrified children: "Now then! Now then!"

Oh, that call, that warning from the tall, lean woman with the scolding voice! They all quaked—all the seven little girls—the youngest clung in her fright to the eldest; the rest, suddenly petrified, stood motionless round the opened bundle; Mr. Ponderbury stood at attention like a startled soldier before the adjutant, and the smile of kindly pleasure was suddenly frozen on the fat face of the enormous fish-seller, their neighbor.

Very stiff in her wretched gown, the tall, lean woman came up to the parcel left lying on the ground, in which I could see in a strange medley the pinions of fowls, halves of apples, fragments of steak, odds and ends of food, diffusing the sickening smell of broken victuals which, in the nostrils of these famished little girls, was as the fragrance of a feast. She picked up the packet in her long, bony fingers, tied the corners which held the black stuff together over these remains, and then, having confiscated Mr. Ponderbury's importation, she looked at the seven children with an expression of icy sternness that riveted them to their places, while her shrill voice pierced the heart of Mr. Ponderbury, who stood thunder-stricken, with these words: "You will always let those disorderly little things waste everything you bring!"

The little man did not stir. Like a schoolboy caught in mischief, he shared the scolding which came down like a douche on the heads of his little girls.

"For having dared to lay a finger on what your father has brought," the lean woman went on, and her nose seemed to grow longer and thinner and to get sharp like a knife coming out of its sheath, "you will wait till to-morrow before you taste a bit."

Mr. Ponderbury could not suppress an "Oh!" and in that "Oh!" which a glance from his wife sent back into his throat at once, there was a note of such pained surprise, an accent of so much regret and reproach and rebellion against injustice, and so much entreaty, too, that Mrs. Ponderbury could not refrain from a shrug of her shoulders—I expected to see her bones come through her thin gown—while the children, moved by a common impulse, hung their poor little dejected heads in resignation, looking at the pavement.

"Yes, to-morrow; not till to-morrow," repeated Mrs. Ponderbury, while the stout neighbor gasped out a sigh of dismay that might have turned a mill sail.

But Mrs. Ponderbury looked at her now, stared at her, and I believe she stared at me, too, with her gray eye, and that she wished she could come up to this stranger and pierce him through with the end of her nose—this inquisitive passer-by, standing still to gaze at Mr. Ponderbury, and the little girls, and their mother.

After which, having reduced us all to silence—the children, the husband, the neighbor and me—Mrs. Ponderbury disappeared into the brick house, carrying the serge bundle which had weighed on the poor musician's arm, like a feather at the end of her long lean hand made of steel springs.

The little man of the sandy hair, mopping his brow with a ragged handkerchief, stood gazing at the seven little girls who had placed themselves in a row, instinctively in steps, and now lifted up their towzled yellow heads, looking at him with silent questioning in their fourteen poor, sad, round eyes.

In a minute he sighed, a deep, weary sigh of resignation, and said gently: "Well, well; it can't be helped!"

He slowly went first in at the house door, followed by the poor little female tribe; the eldest sending her sisters before her, and comforting each in her turn with the dim smile of a kind little pitying mother.

But not a word. Gloomy silence, downcast eyes, and little submissive steps. And thus they disappeared into the doorway of the brick house, swallowed up in a very dark passage; for a minute I watched the little crowd of childish shades, and then—nothing more.

Nothing more upstairs, either, at the curtainless windows which I looked at, expecting to see there the figure of Mrs. Ponderbury or of the little musician. Nothing at all. The tall woman had no doubt locked away up there the eatables brought by her husband, and the whole family was in disgrace.

"And yet it is not a fast day," I muttered in English between my teeth.

"Och!" said the good fat fishwoman who overheard me, "It is fast day most days to those poor crathurs! If ye could know how poor they are!"

She had a strong Irish accent and the volubility of a Southerner, and she talked, talked, talked, describing with gestures the poverty of that little home, the privations of the eight human beings reduced to living on the wretched salary that the melancholy flute-player earned by performing airs from "Martha" at the Star Restaurant. And a whole doleful poem of unrecognized courage and unknown suffering pierced through the cordial fellow-feeling, the pity of a kindred soul, in the good creature's words. I could see the musician, in the midst of the seven famishing little girls, copying music by day, and putting on his shabby dress suit to go in the evening to Oxford-st.; lighting his paraffine lamp on his return, and then, bent over his paper, copying, copying on, half through the night; wearing out his frail body, his nerves and energy, and all the strength that was left in him, by the anæmia of privation and the sorrow of seeing the sufferings of those he loved; and all to feed those seven hungry little ones, and that great gaunt skeleton called Mrs. Ponderbury, the fractious and domineering partner he had chosen, strange to say, whom he feared and worshipped.

"For he just worships her, sir," said the fat Irish woman, nodding [illegible] purple face. "He believes she has not her match in this world. He is not only submissive, he is in love. Yes, I tell ye, as much in love, in spite of his gray hair, as a boy of twenty, and he works and grinds himself to the bone. He is as good as good cake. At the eatin'-house where he plays—and he is clever, ye know, they have played music written by him, dance tunes, at the music halls—at the Star the cooks are good-natured to him, and by leave of the master they keep some of the scraps for him.

"That was what he brought home to-day, as he does every afternoon, to the little ones, in the black serge handkerchief. I am glad meself every now and then to give him something for the children, a dish of whitebait, perhaps, when I have some over and to spare. And he is so thankful, and the seven little mouths eat it up with such an appetite! Mrs. Ponderbury? I don't say but what she mayn't be so bad as she seems, and as for him, Mr. Ponderbury, he is even better than he seems. Only he grows thinner and stoops more and has a cough. What will become of them when he is no longer here to play the flute and feed them all?"

I went again to the Star Restaurant, and in the bright turmoil of the hall blazing with lights, amid the bustle of the diners and the white-tied waiters, while the orchestra on the platform played and played again Spanish "Habaneras" and Hungarian waltzes, I saw him in the same seat, stooping, threadbare, shabby, casting down on the dishes on the counter, brought from the kitchen under their silver covers by the lift and delivered into the hands of the waiters, the same famished and gloomily feverish look that had first struck me. I saw him again, poor Mr. Ponderbury, blowing into his flute, his lips pinched over the holes in the black pipe, nodding his head and beating the time with the tip of his worn shoes, while he looked over the instrument at all the eatables that passed before his eyes, contemplating the food that would have gladdened the heart of those seven little girls, petrified by the stern glance of Mrs. Ponderbury.

And I could see the dismal house, beyond Snow Hill, the brick front, the dark narrow passage, the vacant windows, and the tall, hard shrill-voiced mother.

Mr. Ponderbury played on. He played "Martha," he played "España," he played Fahrbach and Strauss. The champagne corks popped under the glare of the electric light. The company laughed and talked, the cheerful hum of satisfied hunger rose up in the huge hall with its gaudy luxury like that of a great "liner." I could hear nothing, even in the giddy rhythm of the dance music, but the plaintive flute of the poor musician who would presently carry away the crumbs of the feast, the leavings of this luxury, the fragments of these meals, strewn here and there on the now spotted table-cloths, and the wail of the instrument which piped on so sadly seemed to me the perpetual sob of Lazarus looking on at the rich man's banquet. Not that he was rebellious, poor Mr. Ponderbury! But a Lazarus as punctual and mild as a respectful servant should be. Mild in the presence of Fate as in that of Mrs. Ponderbury, or, of his day's hard toil, or of his fatherhood weighted with tasks, but full of joys! Mild under all the burdens of life, always mild, and humble, and silent, and sad.

I made a note of his number in the street he lives in, where he labors, and stoops, and grows leaner every day; and when the stout, purple-faced Irishwoman now and again gets a postal order to pay for whitebait for the seven little Ponderburys, I hope she never tells the little bald man that a stranger from the outside world interferes—as Mrs. Ponderbury would tartly remark—in what is no business of his.—(Jules Claretie, in Figaro Illustré.

THE PHONOGRAPH IN RUSSIA.

From Invention.

Edison's phonograph has had a battle royal with Russian press censorship, says the "Anglo-Russian." In the pavilion of the public gardens in Tagonrog the machine was exhibited, and attracted large audiences. It played and sang, and laughed and spoke for some time undisturbed, until a police officer heard the machine reciting one of Kriloff's famous fables, viz., "Demyan's Ukha" (soup or hospitality), but with some variations on the original text. The officer got suspicious, and not trusting to his memory, he ran at once and got Kriloff's book, and came again to listen to the phonograph's version of the fable. To his horror he found the fable reproduced not at all as it was passed by the censorship more than half a century ago. An alarm was raised at once, the higher local authorities communicated with, and the manager of the pavilion, Mr. Parafinovitch, was called upon to explain the behavior of that speaking American beast. All the poor manager could do was to open the mysterious inside of the criminal machine and hand over to the authorities the indiscreet cylinder which threatened to tell the peaceful inhabitants so many undesirable things. But the arrest of the chief crimina was considered insufficient, as it could not have acted without a human accomplice. So, according to the "Taganrog Viestnik," the affair has taken its official course, and the innocent manager of the pavilion has lost in the mean time his generally good appetite and sound sleep, as he does not know in what punishment the official proceedings will result, and how long he will have to wait until his fate is decided

A LOYAL SUBJECT.

Prince—Is this a lead mine?
Master of Ceremonies—Certainly, Your Majesty. Only this lead is black and burns easily and is generally called coal by the common people!—(Humoristische Deutschland.

THE RUBY HEART.

Aunt Jessica had been round the world more than once. She had been what is vulgarly called a "globe-trotter." In her day she had collected many rare and curious and beautiful things; but now she was an old woman, and her time was come to die in the great, silent house, filled with the furniture that had belonged to Aunt Jessica's forbears many score years ago, and enriched by the spoils of many lands, brought home by the energetic hands of Aunt Jessica herself.

There was one treasure above all that I coveted, and that I would have sold my soul to have had for my own—my Cousin Edith.

As for the money, well, I am not more disinterested than most people; but I would rather have had Edith without a penny than all Aunt Jessica's money without Edith.

William and Bertram and I were sitting in the dining-room. Edith was above, helping poor aunt in the hard work of dying. Three raps came on the floor. We knew they were a signal that we were to go up, and that aunt had asked for us; and up we went.

"I have left everything divided among you four," she said; "and the ruby heart is to go to whichever of you three boys can find it." She spoke slowly and with difficulty.

I remembered the jolly old days when she used to come and see us at school and tip us, and I wished that death and time could have been more merciful. She went on:

"You know it has a charm to make you happy in your love. It would have made me happy, but he died, and it hadn't a chance to do its work; and now my time's come—it has been weary waiting."

And with that—the first and last hint we ever had of a romance in my aunt's life—she turned her wrinkled old face to the pillow with a sigh like a tired child's, and there were only four of us left in the room.

After the funeral and the reading of the will we three men set to work to find the charm.

"I shall take the library and aunt's bedroom first," said Bertram. As these were the rooms she had most used, I imagine he thought he had made the best choice. "You other fellows can arrange as you like!"

William chose the drawing-room and the guest chamber, and they took the whole day searching systematically inch by inch for the ruby heart. I began to look in the dining-room, but Edith came in.

"Do you care so very much for the ruby heart?" said she.

"I confess I should like to find it," I answered.

"Shall I help you to look?"

She pulled out a book or two from the shelves in an aimless, desultory way, and then said:

"It's very sunshiny out of doors, don't you think?"

So we went on the river.

The next day I began to look for the heart again. Edith sent her duenna-companion (who had once been her governess) to ask me if I did not think it would be nice to drive. Of course, I said I thought it would, and off we went.

That evening she asked Bertram and William if they would like to come out next day to see some ruins.

"Thanks," said Bertram, "but I think my first duty to poor aunt's memory is to find that heart."

"Besides," said William, who never had much sentiment, like Bertram, "it's worth thousands of pounds, I believe."

"To say nothing of the charm," I added.

"But you'll come, Wilfrid?" she said, looking at me with her soft gray eyes.

"Of course," I answered.

Bertram and William scowled at me. They would have given their ears, their lives, anything, in short, but their chances of a ruby heart worth thousands of pounds for the privilege that was to be mine to-morrow.

To be in love with Cousin Edith was a mode, a fashion, among us. Besides, Edith was now an heiress.

"As soon as I have fulfilled dear aunt's last wishes," said Bertram—he talked, the silly fool, as if aunt had wished him to find the heart—"I shall be only too glad to accompany my Cousin Edith on any excursion she may propose."

"So shall I," said William.

So Edith and I went to the ruins alone together.

"I hope it does not seem like disrespect to poor aunt's memory," she said as we drove snugly back in the dogcart that evening, "our going out like this. But I couldn't bear to stay in the old house alone where she was so kind to me. It's better to go out, and I'm sure she would have wished it."

I felt that it was foolish of me not to make an effort to find the ruby heart. So next morning I got up very early and came down before the servants were about. I had pulled out half the drawers of the Chinese cabinet and looked into them, when my heart leaped into my mouth at the touch of a hand on my shoulder—Edith's!

"Still after that wretched ruby?" she said. "How you waste your time!"

"Why? Don't you think I shall find it?"

"I don't know," she said, looking at me with her eyes wide open, "but I don't think you will find it there, because Bertram has been through that three times already. Did you ever eat strawberries before breakfast and gather them yourself?"

So we went into the kitchen garden and ate strawberries till the gong rang for breakfast. Bertram and William were getting quite sulky and savage from the non-success of their search, and the little time I had devoted to it annoyed them.

"I believe," said Bertram, with an air of gayety, a little overdone, "that Wilfrid thinks he knows where the heart is, and that he can put his hand on it at any moment."

"I wish I could," I said.

"So do I," said Edith, almost in the same breath.

"You wish Wilfrid to find the heart?" said William. "Why?"

"Oh, no. I don't mean Wilfrid; I meant—at least—— Well, we shall all be glad when it's settled one way or the other, shan't we?"

I had never told Edith I loved her, because I didn't know how my aunt intended to leave her money, and if Edith were to be the heiress of the whole—but any one will understand my reasons.

It was a week after aunt's funeral that I went into the rose garden, where Edith was snipping roses into a basket.

"I've been looking for the heart again," I said, "but I haven't found it."

"No," she answered, "and I don't suppose you will. Would a Gloire de Dijon be any compensation?"

She began to stick one in my coat as she spoke. Her slender waist, in its black gown, was very near my left arm where she stood.

"I will take the bud," I said, "but not as compensation for the heart."

"Don't you think," she asked me, "that it might be possible to live happily without a charm to help you?"

"No," I said, "not without a charm to help you. But ruby hearts are not the only charms in the world."

My arm fell on her waist.

"Let them find their ruby heart! Let them chop it in pieces and divide it between them and sell the bits," said I.

"And you are content with what you have?" she asked.

"I am content with what I have," I answered, and my other arm went round her.

. . . . . .

They never found that ruby heart, though the poor old house was tapped and tested from top to bottom. At last, wearied out, they took the portion of goods that fell unto them and went, fortunately for us, into a far country. And Edith and I were married.

We didn't go on a wedding tour, but came straight back to the dear old house.

On the evening of our wedding day we walked in the moonlight through the rose garden to listen to the nightingales. I stopped to hold her in my arms on the very spot where I had first kissed her, and the light shawl she wore round her head and shoulders fell back.

"What's that you have round your neck?" I said, for something darkened amid the white laces on her breast.

She did not answer. I put up my hand, touched with a thrill the whiteness of her neck, and found in my fingers the ruby heart!

"Then she gave it to you," I said; "it is yours?"

"She gave it into my keeping," answered Edith, dropping her chin till her lips rested on my hand; "but she left it to the man who should find it."

"And I have found it—here!"—(E. Nesbit in The Argosy.

THE ANCIENT SECT OF DORRILITES.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS CONCERNING A FANATICAL BODY THAT HELD FORTH IN GUILFORD, VT.

From The Springfield Republican.

An article recently published in "The Republican" concerning a certain fanatical sect in Connecticut brought to the minds of some of the older residents in this vicinity another sect of religious, or better, irreligious, fanatics, who once existed in the adjoining town of Guilford and in Leyden, Mass., the descendants of whom are members of respectable families in those towns and in Brattleboro and other towns near by. The followers of the sect in question were called Dorrilites, from the name of their leader, William Dorril, and their conduct during the few years that the sect existed forms an independent chapter in the history of local organizations.

William Dorril was an Englishman, and is said to have been born in Yorkshire, England, March 15, 1752, although some of his grandchildren fix the date of his birth from four to six years earlier. He enlisted in the British Army under General Burgoyne, but deserted in the march across country, and, after spending a number of years in various places, he went to Leyden about 1794, where he got possession of the farm known as the Dorril farm on Frizzle Hill. This farm is now owned by the widow of James Shattuck, and is situated just south of the Guilford line. Dorril was powerfully built and was a fluent speaker, and although he could neither read nor write, he had a wonderful memory, and after hearing his wife read the Bible he could "quote Scripture by the yard."

Soon after going to Leyden he began preaching the doctrine that man should not eat of flesh and should not cause the death of any living creature or make use of anything procured at the expense of life. He proclaimed himself to be the Messiah of his generation and set at naught all the doctrines of the Bible. He pretended to be possessed of supernatural power, and that, as he was armed with attributes of the Deity, it was beyond the power of human arm to do him injury. He gained followers from the start, and soon numbered among them respectable people from all sections of the country round about. They put off their leather shoes, which, contrary to Dorril's teaching, were made at the expense of life, and had others made of wood or cloth. Dorril's shoes, made from solid blocks of wood, are now on exhibition at the museum at Deerfield.

Meetings were held once a week, at which worship consisted in eating, drinking, singing, dancing and fiddling and listening to the promulgation of Dorril's "confession of faith." The Dorrilites' property was common stock and was placed in the hands of the treasurer, Amos Burroughs. Mr. Burroughs was father of the late Jarvis Burroughs, who built the Vernon House, now owned and conducted by T. L. Johnson. Concerning the mesmeric power of this arch impostor the interesting story is told that at one of the meetings Dorril proffered to one of his followers to be able to crawl through a solid log from one end to the other. Having mesmerized his victim he proceeded to crawl along the top of the log, when his victim, seized with a sudden desire to strike the log, presumably to watch the effect of the sound upon the man inside, grabbed a club which lay at hand and brought it down with terrific force upon Dorril's back. Dorril never repeated the operation of crawling through a log. The adherents to Dorril's doctrine were, as a result, scantily clad, and when, upon one occasion, a march through several towns was planned, the citizens, who had by this time become thoroughly disgusted, armed themselves with beech withes and the march was speedily abandoned.

The influence of Dorril over the more respectable of his followers began to wane about 1798, principally because of his intemperate habits, and the last meeting of the sect took place during that year. Dorril opened with music, and at length began to proclaim his immunity from bodily weakness, stating that no arm could hurt his flesh. At that point one of his hearers, Captain Ezekiel Foster, of massive frame, rose indignant at this blasphemy, and, with one blow of his fist, knocked Dorril to the ground and repeated the operation as often as the blasphemer arose. Dorril begged for mercy, and at the command of Captain Foster he renounced his doctrine before his astonished followers. Chagrined and ashamed to be thus duped, the latter departed to their homes, and Dorril promised upon penalty of his life never again to impose upon them.

For nearly fifty years afterward Dorril continued to live in Leyden, but he drank liquor habitually, which so increased his infirmities that for many years he was one of the town's paupers. At regular intervals he would go to the middle town of Leyden and procure a quantity of liquor, become intoxicated on the way home and crawl into a hole in the side of the mountain and go to sleep. So often was he seen there by passersby that the place was called Dorril's cave, and it is known as such to the present day. The wooden bottle of one gallon capacity in which he carried his liquor is still a valued relic owned by one of his grandchildren. Dorril died August 28, 1846, of starvation, having fasted within a few hours of forty days.